

# THE DEADLY "MACHETE."

This Is the Weapon and This Is the Way General Weyler Will Try to Crush the Cuban Revolution.



## CRUELITIES OF SPAIN'S BLOODTHIRSTY GENERAL

His Career and Bloody Crimes More Terrible Even Than Those of the Turks.

Here, broadly outlined, for the inner details of his masterful life are known only to himself, is the story of Senor Don Valeriano y Weyler Nicolau, "The Butcher," now Captain General and Commander in Chief of the Island of Cuba, the prince of all the cruel generals this century has seen.

Spain, exasperated at the strength the revolutionists have developed and the zeal with which they have declined to allow themselves to be stamped out, has at last played her trump card and sent on the field of battle, with the powers of a monarch almost, her most ferocious and bloody soldier, this man of iron, Weyler, the fiendish despot whose hand Cuba well knows.

He has hardly more than matured his plan of action as yet, and it is not probable that the waiting world will hear the details of the deeds he proposes to do in the name of the baby King of Spain for some time, but this much he has promised, with all the swagger and bravado he displayed in Cuba a quarter of a century ago—that he will sweep the island in a month, and that the planters will be able to cut their sugar-cane without fall before April comes in.

A panic has spread over Cuba, from end to end at the mere mention of his name. Not only are the revolutionists beginning to fear, knowing that they have now to face the most merciless commander of modern times, but scores, nay, hundreds and thousands, of Cuban women, maids and matrons, shudder because of the remembrance of the deeds that this man did in the last generation and the haunting terror that he will do them all over again when he comes to grapple with this. It is not only Weyler the soldier and the skilful strategist for all the man is a master in the art of deploying troops—but Weyler the brute, the devastator of haciendas, the destroyer of families and the outrager of women.

TO-MORROW BEGINS THE TERROR. With all the shrewdness of an experienced diplomat and tactician, Weyler, the new commander, has issued three terrible proclamations. In accordance with an old custom some days elapse before such orders go into effect. To-day is the end of the time. To-morrow each of these proclamations will be in force, and the grip of the iron hand that savagely seizes the velvet glove will hold Cuba from its centre to its outlying reefs.

If the past may be taken as a criterion of the future, the reign of terror that Cuba will now see is more than likely to be unsurpassed in the annals of the Nineteenth Century. Even the savagery of the "unspeakable Turk" and the crime of Armenia stand out in no darker colors than do Weyler's deeds in the Cuba of '93 and '70. The proclamations this steely, devil-prompted military man just issued appear innocent enough as black words on white paper, but their purport it is easy to see. Much more terrible are they than the proclamation of Valmaseda in 1893, against the brutality of which no less a personage than Hamilton Fish, then American Secretary of State, protested. The real significance of Weyler's orders is that any man or woman he pleases can be killed without a trial's formality, without the chance of a word in defence. They mean a campaign of unprecedented assassination and butchery all over the island.

Should Weyler fail in his attempt to subdue Cuba, Spain's final chance is gone, for this flower of all her Generals is in himself her last hope. Never, to look at the situation coolly, was a last hope placed in better hands. Neither pity nor mercy does the new Captain-General ever feel

or has he ever felt. Pitiless, cold, an exterminator of men—that has been his record since the first day he left school and became a young officer mad to stain his hands with blood.

WEYLER AS HE IS.

His personality is extraordinarily interesting, because in his carriage and in the very lines of his face his every thought and every emotion are pictured. There is no need of X rays to photograph on some luminous plate his inner consciousness and his desires, for not an emotion is hidden. Fifty-seven years of age this winter, his life has been one great pageant of military triumphs. Never once has the man failed in anything he has undertaken. Step by step he has climbed up the ladder of rank, beginning as a boyish young Captain, until now he stands at the head of armed Spain. Few, if any, of the great commanders of history have been men of large stature. "The Butcher" keeps well within this rule. Of only medium height, he is broad-shouldered, stockily built, and muscular. His face is a remarkable study in itself. The head is large, and all its features prominent. Sparse, once dark hair, now turning to an iron gray, meets a broad, receding forehead. There are tense and sharp lines and furrows just over the bridge of the nose, the latter the most prominent feature of the face. Shrewd, cold, glinting eyes are set far back in their sockets, under bushy eyebrows. The nose is strong and masterful. A broad, thin-lipped mouth is not at all hidden by the thin mustache that is supplemented by luxuriant, well-cropped side-whiskers, also tinged with gray and framing in the hard and stern chin.

Masterful alone is this square set chin, smooth shaven, save for a little tuft just under the lower lip, of that sort that the French denominate as a "barbiche." It is the chin and the nose, the long upper lip and the furrows in the forehead, just over the eyes, that are the characteristics of this man's face. Taken altogether, or taken singly, they set forth the cruelty of his nature in unmistakable terms. There is no opportunity for misapprehension, no dallying with the facts. Sensual, shrewd, murderous, both because of the power of relentless ambition and because the man likes to be cruel, Weyler shows himself in every lineament.

His military coat bears upon it every honor, every cross and every badge known in Spain, save those set apart for those of royal blood. But not even these glistening insignia soften or relieve for a moment the savage face above. Time, indeed, has made that face more set and more merciless than ever before. The brutalities its owner has planned and executed have all left their traces there, forcing every gleam of kindness that might at one time have found stray lodgment away, never to get a foothold again.

HIS BIRTH AND CAREER. Most marvelous, even in these days of individual triumphs, has been the career of this Spanish bully. Especially remarkable has been the course he has run, when it comes to be considered that he is not a Spaniard of pure race. The old Hidalgo blood does not flow unrestricted and unmixed through his veins; it is diluted and mingled with that of another and an alien people. What makes it even worse, when Spanish traditions and pride of descent are argued, it is on his paternal side that this intermixture of blood comes.

By descent Weyler is a Prussian, as his name indicates, only of Spanish ancestry and so successful in all he has undertaken

And This Is Spain's "BUTCHER."



Gen. Valeriano Weyler, the Most Cruel and Bloodthirsty General in the World.

has "The Butcher" been, that even in the peninsula of proud and haughty Dons his lack of Spanish family has been forgiven and his birthright has weighed as nothing in the scale.

Not many words are needed to outline his career. He was born on the 17th of September, 1839, in Palma de Mallorca, and at an early age entered the Colegio de Infanteria of Toledo. Though but a boy, and of tender years at that, he even then was of brilliant promise. Class by class he moved up in that renowned institution filled with the most brilliant boys of Spain, and so far did he outstrip them that on the day of his graduation he stood, as the Spaniards say, "Number One," that is, at the head of his class.

It was a brilliant performance, but a victory only won by unrelenting work. The power and the willingness to work without ceasing, it may be said, has ever since been a characteristic of this brutal master of troops. Even now, though nearing his sixtieth year, he frequently rises at 3 in the morning to get to his work of fiendish planning and plotting in order that every one may be ground under his iron heel. With the boy it was the same as it is to-day with the middle-aged man.

Once out of school, he was made a captain immediately, and, strangely enough, he was at once detailed to Cuba. It is wonderful how fate will weave its way and woe about a man. Cuba has been the pivot, the one essential, crucial point of Weyler's fortunes, the great stamping-ground whereon he has made mark after mark. In Cuba he went as a boy soldier to get his first military experience. In Cuba a man with the first bloom of youth all gone—this in 1860—he made himself the most wonderful junior officer of the time. Now, once again in Cuba, he is filling the centre of the stage.

EXPLOITS IN THE INDIES. The young officer did so well in Cuba in the late '50's that he was sent to San Domingo, on which island he performed deeds of great valor in the revolution of that early day, conquering the stretch of country he was assigned to with such ease and such an evident acquirement of the arts of brutality that he was recognized as destined to advance rapidly. He made one famous march in that revolution, with 120 men and six horses, that has gone down in

the annals of Spanish rule in the West Indies.

Even at that early date he soon got to be known as one of the very best officers in the Spanish possessions, and when, a few years later, the Cubans attempted to establish a republic and orders came out from Spain, supplemented by transports filled with troops, to put down the insurgents, Count Valmaseda, the general in command, appointed Weyler general of one of the dying columns of his battalions, assigning him to the eastern part of the province of Santiago, a district that needed a cool head and a cruel hand.

How well Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau learned his lessons of military brushiness under the tuition of the infamous Valmaseda—if indeed any one was ever able to teach "The Butcher" anything in the way of fiendishness that he did not already know—may be judged from the fact that Valmaseda considered him his best general and the most promising officer of Young Spain. In the few years Weyler spent in doing more than his part to render Cuba a waste and blot out her inhabitants, he was meanwhile adding to his reputation and importance at Madrid. No sooner was the rebellion finally suppressed than he found himself preferred as were few others for promotion. The Crown knew it had found the right man to dedicate and torture.

During the years that followed hardly a month passed that Weyler did not distinguish himself in some manner. With his secret ideal the famous Duke of Alva, who headed the Spanish campaign in the Low Countries over 300 years ago, once there establishing his Council of Blood, and killing with grim laughter that he might confiscate for his master, Philip of Spain, "The Butcher" made himself, a modern Alva with wonderful fidelity. The Spanish Government sent him off to the Philippine Islands to quell an insurrection, and he covered those bits of territory out in the China Sea with thousands of blood, returning successful beyond the hopes of the Cortes.

This last great exploit of his was in 1880. Since then he has been living quietly in Spain in command of one of the divisions of the Spanish Army at home, resting on his laurels, but with his prestige growing greater each year. When it was seen that Campos could not put down the present

insurrection, the entire country's thought turned at once to Weyler, "The Butcher," and it was the word among diplomats on every hand that he was the one man who could terrify and force to her knees the Cuba of revolt.

THEY WOULD KILL HIM.

With his headquarters in Havana, Valeriano Weyler is plotting day by day for his great strategic moves. One thing, and one thing only, Spain seems to fear—that before he can bring his crushing machinery of death in every direction, innocent and guilty alike, he will die by an assassin's bullet or dagger. With the helmetman struck down failure would be almost inevitable. There is no small likelihood of this, for there are thousands of men in Cuba to-day who would gladly sacrifice their lives for the purpose of killing this man. They would do this in the remembrance of the outrages and indignities their mothers or wives, perhaps even their children, suffered a quarter of a century ago at Weyler's hands. For the most horrible thing about this man's campaigning, and that which is striking terror through Cuba, is that it is not alone the insurgents that suffer under his rule, but the innocent and helpless as well.

Incarcerated savagery is the only description. Bestial, sensual cruelty are but faint words to describe what these men remember. And the Weyler of to-day, it is feared, is worse, immeasurably worse, than the Weyler of 1870, who was to some extent restrained because he was not in complete command. Now there is nothing to prevent his carnal, animal brain from running riot with itself in inventing tortures and infamies of bloody debauchery, which he will dignify under the comprehensive title of "Martial Law."

This was the Weyler of the Cuban revolution of 1893 to 1872. The instances and experiences given are not fragments of the imagination or highly drawn pictures based on slight facts, nor are they colored nor faint words to describe what these men remember. And the Weyler of to-day, it is feared, is worse, immeasurably worse, than the Weyler of 1870, who was to some extent restrained because he was not in complete command. Now there is nothing to prevent his carnal, animal brain from running riot with itself in inventing tortures and infamies of bloody debauchery, which he will dignify under the comprehensive title of "Martial Law."

and which has never been translated into English.

The book was written by a Spaniard named Enrique Donderio, who had come over from Spain with the Spanish troops to see the war and who was so horror-stricken with the awful crimes he saw committed that he fled to the United States and there compiled his manuscript. Telling is this evidence, and it shows General Weyler, stripped of all trappings of military authority, as a brute pure and simple, his hands forever stained with the blood of defenseless senoritas.

Under Valmaseda the division generals of the Spanish army charged with crushing the revolution of 1893, who were scattered through the island, each with his own command and with instructions to handle the people they came in contact with precisely as a terrier dog does a rat, were bitterly cruel. They were, one and all, men of unbounded ferocity, whose one object was to make military records for themselves regardless of any feeling of humanity. Boat and Palacios, Marin and Montaner form an awful quartet of names in Cuban history. With the tenacity of bulldogs they ravaged, with their long fangs of death and destruction. They were known and will ever be known in the West Indies as the "human hyenas." But—and it is no exaggeration to say this—Weyler in his own district out-Heroded Herod, and went far beyond all the other generals in his capacity, in his bold crimes against every law of even ordinary decency. He so eclipsed them all, wreaking the most of his animal ferocity on the utterly defenceless, that it was there and then that he achieved his best known title, "The Butcher."

VILLAINOUS OUTRAGES.

It was not alone that he carried out the brutal orders of Valmaseda. Had he done only that the Cubans of to-day would fix the blame upon Valmaseda instead of upon him. But he went much further; he took it upon himself to cause the outrage and murder of scores of women in the small towns and villages that lay in the district he was commanding. The details of these outrages are too horrible almost to relate, but they need to be told to show what manner of man this is who is now attempting to throttle Cuba.

His favorite amusement was entering into a village with a regiment of soldiers and "rounding up" all the women to be found in the dwellings. If there happened to be any men left in the village at that time they would be shot down without delay. The women huddled together in a frightened group; he would form his troops in a hollow square, facing inward, and then, having three or four of the women, and even little girls of the tender age of ten or eleven years—stripped absolutely naked, he would drive them into the square at the point of the bayonet, and make them dance until exhausted, the double file of sensual Spaniards gazing on in delight.

When one set had fallen panting to the ground he would deliver them over to the soldiers for their gratification and bring out others until every woman in the village, stripped, had been forced to submit to these terrible indignities. Finally the tortured creatures would be put out of their misery by being hacked literally to pieces with swift strokes of the sharp Cuban machetes.

The machete is a long, slightly curved Cuban knife, very sharp and heavy, used for cutting and not thrusting. In times of peace it is employed for cutting sugar cane, but in times of war it is one of the most deadly of implements. The Spanish troops invariably use the machete, adopting it soon after their arrival in Cuba.

Weyler's troops used to use this knife, by his orders, with great effectiveness. Another scheme of his which he carried out frequently with great satisfaction to himself was the holding of a ball in some large hall in a town. He would send a great number of invitations to the affair, including everybody that he had made up his mind to kill. Now an invitation from General Weyler was not to be treated lightly. Nobody dared to refuse it, in fact. No man's life would have been worth the thinking about if he decided not to go. Some of these balls used to pass off very smoothly and without any deviation from the programme of a regular Cuban dance.

But this was not often. At some time during the evening—at every other ball at least—after liquor had been flowing freely and the men and women guests who did not dare to do anything else than drink were pretty well stupefied, a sudden hush would fall over the room, the music would stop, and a gang of Weyler's soldiers, with murderous machetes in their hands, would rush in, slashing right and left, and keeping both doors and windows guarded so that hardly a person could escape. The women, of course, would be saved for orgies later on. On one occasion of this sort, it is recalled, the carnage was so fierce that not even the hired musicians escaped with their lives.

WORSE THAN THE TURKS.

Here is another incident, taken down from the lips of a Cuban of position, who lives in New York City to-day: "You can refer to the country place named Levado, belonging to Magallana, who was Vice-President of the then Republic of Cuba. Weyler came to that country place and found, sick in bed and almost dying, Eugenio O'Donard Tomasgo and his brother. They were almost dead

of consumption and in a state of ulceration. Weyler had them dragged out of their beds, dragged through the hallways, and outdoors to a little wood. There they were cut to pieces with machetes—actually minced.

"The wife of the manager of the estate who was there with her little daughter, eight or nine years old, was taken out of the house, deprived of her clothing, and made to dance, together with her little daughter. Both were afterwards outraged and hacked to pieces."

In Donderio's book, mentioned above, the writer (who, it must be remembered, was a Spaniard and not a Cuban, and who would certainly not have told falsehoods against his countrymen) gives these three thrilling little dramas of horror, taken from the reign of Weyler at this period: "As we approached the ruined village of Boire, we saw coming toward us the guerrillas of a Spanish column, who, in a reconquering expedition into the woods, thereabout, had found a small colony of Cuban families whose male individuals they had all assassinated, and whose ears they were bringing strung on their bayonets, so as to show the number they had killed, and claim the reward, as if they had been wild beasts."

"In one of the camps one could contemplate the troops looking, with almost the satisfaction of tigers, upon four women that they had captured. Three of them were from sixteen to twenty years of age, and the other was more advanced in years and was accompanied by two small girls from seven to nine years old. These mother she was. When the afternoon began to fall the soldiers' especial delight in telling these what their fate would be just satisfaction of seeing them weep as they prayed for mercy."

"The lady to whom I have referred above belonged to the wealthy family of Los Penos. She thought to soften the hearts of the soldiers by presenting to them her two little daughters, who were besides rather sickly, and praying that they should not be condemned to an act which would without doubt cause their immediate death. But all her supplications were in vain. The soldiers were finally given authority to do with the women as they pleased. Next morning they were all dead."

"I once witnessed the arrival of a column at a small Cuban settlement with thirteen families. The troops had taken from the men, and were then compelled to gather the wood with which their relatives were to be reduced to ashes after being butchered. The women were, of course, according to the usual custom, minced. These were picked out at random from Donderio's book, and the three stories are unconnected. They are translated literally from the original Spanish, and the peculiar idioms are kept."

MORE OF HIS CRIMES.

Weyler, however, did not confine his barbarities to women. With men he was brutal almost beyond the power of words to describe. A Cuban gentleman of this city recalls the following instances: "I once saw a man, a Cuban, who was a lawyer, physician, and representative man of the district, who was taken to a large enormous club and beat them unmercifully, and then there ordered that next morning they be shot. And they were shot."

An even more horrible story is told as follows: "A man came out of a jail one day when he met a gentleman of wealth and position in the town who complained to him that the troops had taken all his cattle. Weyler at once ordered him to be tied by the neck to the iron bars of the jail, and there he was left for three days, and then he was shot. The next morning he was found dead, his eyeballs had dropped out of their sockets."

Most incredible of all is this deed of "The Butcher." It happened in the beyond question; how many more times it is impossible to say. This happened in a small village in the town of Sagua. "The Butcher," with a goodly sized force of troops, was travelling over the country, cutting and killing. One day, when he came by chance upon a little family he had somehow in a previous visit overpowered, he found a mother and two sons. With a fiendish sort of delight, Weyler took them into captivity. He marched them along, closely guarded, until he came to the spot he wanted. Then, calling upon his men to halt, he made his plans with his usual wonderful rapidity of thought and scheme, for an outrage that could hardly be excused.

He bound the father and mother firmly to trees near each other, trees that were facing a little bit of greenwood. Then, having the daughters held tightly by the guards, he proceeded to order several of his soldiers to hack the young boys to pieces with their machetes. The screams of the victims and the walls of their agonized relatives would have stopped any other man short in his dreadful course. But Weyler only smiled.

The boys now lying dead, "The Butcher" signalled to his soldiers to bring out the girls. They were pretty, dainty senoritas, in the first flush and blush of womanhood, and Weyler's smile grew more sardonic as they were marched before him. Then and there, in full sight of the father and mother, he ordered his soldiers to strip the young women of every article of their clothing, and for half an hour forced them to dance upon the green turf with all the troops looking on. With the agony of seeing their sons slain before their eyes and their daughters in such a humiliating position, the parents were nearly insane. Yet Weyler was not through yet. It seems absolutely impossible to say that any man could be possessed of such cruelty, but facts are facts, and it is the sober truth, vouched for by several Cubans in this city, that immediately following the dancing, with the distracted father and mother still looking on, "The Butcher" gave instructions to have the girls violated before their eyes. If it proved the death of both of them, he left the father and mother—whose lives Weyler spared—hopelessly insane."